

Treatises

1. Perictione On Woman's Harmony

Fr. I

T 142.17–145.6; Stob. *Anth.* 4.28.19 Hercher p. 688 (Mullach 2 p. 34)

Περικτιόνης Πυθαγορείας

ἐκ τοῦ *Περὶ* γυναικὸς ἀρμονίας. 1.¹ Τὴν ἀρμονίην γυναιῖκα νόσασθαι δεῖ
φρονήσιός τε καὶ σωφροσύνης πλείην· κάρτα γὰρ ψυχὴν πεπνύσθαι
δεῖ εἰς ἀρετὴν, ὥστ' ἔσται καὶ δικαίη καὶ ἀνδρική καὶ φρονέουσα καὶ (20)
αὐταρκείῃ καλλυνομένη καὶ κενὴν δόξην μισέουσα. ἐκ τούτων γὰρ
ἔργματα καλὰ γίνεται γυναικὶ ἐς αὐτὴν τε καὶ ἄνδρα καὶ τέκεα καὶ
οἶκον· πολλάκις δὲ καὶ πόλει, εἴ γε πόλιας ἢ ἔθνεα ἢ τοίη γε κρατύνοι,
(143) ὥς ἐπὶ βασιληίης ὀρέομεν. κρατέουσα ὦν ἐπιθυμίας καὶ θυμοῦ, ὅσῃ καὶ
ἀρμονίῃ γίγνεται· ὥστε οὐδὲ ἔρωτες αὐτὴν ἄνομοι διώξουσιν, ἀλλ'
ἐς ἄνδρα τε καὶ τέκεα καὶ τὸν οἶκον ξύμπαντα φιλήν ἔξει. ὁκόσαι
γὰρ ἐράστριαι τελέθουσιν ἀλλοτρίων λεχέων, αὗται δὲ πολέμιοι γίνονται
πάντων τῶν ἐν τῇ οἰκίῃ ἐλευθέρων τε καὶ οἰκετέων· καὶ συντιθῇ ψύθῃ (5)
καὶ δόλους ἀνδρὶ καὶ ψεύδεα κατὰ πάντων μυθίζεταί· πρὸς τοῦτον,
ἵνα μούνη δοκέῃ διαφέρειν εὐνοίῃ καὶ τῆς οἰκίης κρατῇ ἀργίην φιλέουσα.
ἐκ τούτων γὰρ φθορὴ γίγνεται συμπάντων ὁκόσα αὐτῇ τε καὶ τῷ
ἀνδρὶ ξυνὰ ἐστί. καὶ ταῦτα μὲν ἄχρι τῶνδε λελέχθω. 2. σκῆνος δὲ ἄγειν
χρὴ πρὸς μέτρα φύσιος τροφῆς τε πέρι καὶ ἱματίων καὶ λουτρῶν καὶ (10)
ἀλειψίων καὶ τριχῶν θέσιος καὶ τῶν ὁκόσα ἐς κόσμον ἐστί [χρυσοῦ
καὶ λίθων]. ὁκόσαι γὰρ πολυτελέα πάντα ἐσθίουσι καὶ πίνουσι καὶ
ἀμπέχονται καὶ φορέουσι τὰ φορέουσι γυναιῖκες, ἐς ἀμαρτήν ἔτοιμαι
κακίης συμπάσης ἐς τε λέχεα καὶ ἐς τὰ ἄλλα ἀδικοπρηγέες. λιμὸν
ὦν καὶ δίψαν ἐξακέεσθαι δεῖ μῶνον, κῆν ἐκ τῶν εὐτελέων ἔη, καὶ (15)

¹ I have divided the text into into four sections: 1) introduction; 2) pitfalls to avoid; 3) rules to follow; 4) conclusion.

- ρίγος, κῆν νάκος κῆν σισύρη. βρωτῆρας δὲ εἶναι τῶν τηλόθεν ἢ τῶν πολλοῦ πωλεομένων ἢ τῶν ἐνδόξων κακίη οὐχὶ μικρὰ πέφαται· ἡμφιάσθαι <δ> εἴματα ἀπεικότα λίην καὶ ποικίλα ἀπὸ θαλασσίης βάβιος τοῦ κόχλου ἢ ἄλλης χροῆς πολυτελέος μωρίη πολλή. σκῆνος γὰρ ἐθέλει μὴ ῥιγέειν μηδὲ γυμνὸν εἶναι χάριν εὐπρεπείης, ἄλλου δ' οὐδενὸς χρήζει. δόξα δὲ ἀνθρώπων μετὰ ἀμαθίης ἐς τὰ κενεὰ τε καὶ περισσὰ ἵεται. ὥστ' οὔτε χρυσὸν ἀμφιθίσεται ἢ λίθον Ἰνδικὸν ἢ χῶρης ἐόντα ἄλλης, οὐδὲ πλέξεται πολυτεχνίησι τρίχας, οὐδ' ἀλείφεται Ἀραβίης ὀδμῆς ἐμπνέοντα, οὐδὲ χρίσεται πρόσωπον λευκαίνουσα ἢ ἐρυθραίνουσα τοῦτο ἢ μελαίνουσα ὀφρύας τε καὶ ὀφθαλμοὺς καὶ τὴν πολὴν τρίχα βαφαῖσι τεχνεωμένη, οὐδὲ λούσεται θαμινά. ἢ γὰρ ταῦτα ζητέουσα θηητῆρα ζητεῖ ἀκρασίης γυναικείης. κάλλος γὰρ τὸ ἐκ φρονήσιος, οὐκὶ δὲ τὸ ἐκ τούτων, ἀνδάνει ταῖς γινομέναισιν εὖ. ἀναγκαῖα δὲ μὴ ἡγεέσθω εὐγενήνῃν καὶ πλοῦτον καὶ μεγάλης πόλιος πάντως γενέσθαι καὶ δόξαν καὶ φιλήν ἐνδόξων καὶ βασιλεῶν ἀνδρῶν· ἦν μὲν γὰρ ἔη, οὐ λυπέει· ἦν δὲ μὴ ἔη, ἐπιζητέειν οὐ ποιεῖν· τούτων γὰρ δίχα φρονίμη (144) γυνὴ ζῆν οὐ κωλύεται. κῆν ἔη δὲ ταῦτα ἄπερ λελάχαται, τὰ μεγάλα καὶ θαυμαζόμενα μὴ ποτε διζέσθω ψυχῇ, ἀλλὰ καὶ ἄπωθεν αὐτῶν βαδιζέτω· βλάπτει γὰρ μᾶλλον ἐς ἀτυχήν ἔλκοντα ἢ ὠφελεί. τούτοις γὰρ ἐπιβουλή τε καὶ φθόνος καὶ βασκανίη προσκέεται, ὥστε ἐν ἀταραξίῃ οὐκ ἂν γένοιτο ἡ τοιγδε. 3. θεοὺς δὲ σέβειν δεῖ ἐς εὐελπιστίην εὐδαιμονίης, νόμοισί τε καὶ θεσμοῖσι πειθομένην πατρίοισι. μετὰ δὲ τούτους μυθεύομαι [τοὺς θεοὺς] γονέας τιμᾶν καὶ σέβειν· οὗτοι γὰρ ἴσα θεοῖσι πάντα πέλουσι καὶ πρήσσουσι τοῖς ἐγγόνιοις. πρὸς δὲ τὸν ἄνδρα τὸν ἑαυτῆς ζῶειν ὧδε δεῖ νομίμως καὶ κρηγύως, μηδὲν ἐννεωμένην ἰδίῃ, ἀλλ' εὐνὴν τηρεῦσαν καὶ φυλάσσουσαν· ἐν τούτῳ γὰρ ἔστι τὰ ξύμπαντα. φέρειν δὲ χρή τῷ ἀνδρὸς πάντα, κῆν ἀτυχή, κῆν ἀμάρτη κατ' ἄγνοιαν ἢ νοῦσον ἢ μέθην, ἢ ἄλλῃσι γυναιξὶ συγγένηται· ἀνδράσι μὲν γὰρ ἐπιχωρέεται ἀμαρτίη αὐτῇ· γυναιξὶ δὲ οὐκοτε, τιμωρίῃ δ' ἐφέστηκεν. σώσασθαι ὦν τὸν νόμον δεῖ καὶ μὴ ζηλοτυπέειν· φέρειν δὲ καὶ ὀργὴν καὶ φειδωλήν καὶ μεμψιμοιρίην καὶ ζηλοτυπίην καὶ κακηγορίην καὶ ἦν τι ἄλλο ἔχη ἐκ φύσιος, καὶ τούτῳ θήσεται πάντα ὅκως φίλον ἐστὶν αὐτέῳ σωφρονέουσα. γυνὴ γὰρ ἀνδρὶ φίλη οὖσα καὶ τάνδρὸς πρήσσουσα κρηγύως, ἀρμονίῃ ὑπάρχει, καὶ οἶκον τὸν ξύμπαντα φιλέει καὶ τοὺς θύρηθεν εὐνόους τῇ οἰκίῃ ποιεῖ· ἐπὴν δὲ μὴ φιλήῃ, οὔτε οἶκον οὔτε παῖδας τοὺς ἑωυτῆς οὔτε θεράποντας οὔτε οὐσίην ἡντιναῶν ἐθέλει σῶαν ἐσιδέειν, φθορὴν δὲ πᾶσαν ἀρεῖται καὶ εὔχεται εἶναι, ὥς πολεμίῃ ἐοῦσα, καὶ τὸν ἄνδρα εὔχεται τεθνάναι ὥς ἐχθρόν, ὅπως ἄλλοισιν

όμουρέη, καὶ όκόσοι άνδάνουσι τουτέω έχθαίρει. 4. άρμονίον² δέ αὐτήν
 ὠδε δοκέω, εἰ πλείους τελέθει φρονήσιός τε καὶ σωφροσύνης. οὐ γάρ
 μούνον ὠφελήσει τόν άνδρα, ἀλλὰ καὶ παῖδας καὶ συγγενέας καὶ δούλως
 (145) καὶ τήν οἰκίην ξύμπασαν, ἐν ἣ καὶ κτήματα καὶ φίλοι πολιῆταί τε
 καὶ ξένοι εἰσί· καὶ ἀπεριεργίῃ τὸ σκῆνος διάξει τουτέων, λεσχαίνουσά
 τε καὶ ἀκούουσα καλά, καὶ ἀκολουθέουσά τε αὐτέω καθ' ὁμοδοξίην
 τῆς ξυνηῆς βιοτῆς, καὶ οἷς ἐκείνος αὖξει συγγενέσι τε καὶ φίλοισι ξυνομαρ-
 τέουσα, καὶ ταῦτά ἡγεομένη γλυκέα τε καὶ πικρά τῶνδρί, ἣν μὴ ἀναρμό- (5)
 νιος εἰς τὸ πᾶν ἔη.

Perictione On Woman's Harmony Fr. I

By Perictione the Pythagorean from *On a Woman's Harmony*.

1. A woman filled with wisdom and self-restraint must set her mind on (achieving) harmony; for her soul must be very wise with respect to virtue so that she can be just and courageous, sensible, adorned with self-sufficiency, and despising empty reputation. From these virtues come good deeds to the woman for herself as well as for her husband, her children, and her home, and often even for her city, if such a woman rules cities or nations, as we see in monarchies. When she controls her desires and will,³ holiness and harmony are born, so that illicit passions will not haunt her, but she will keep her love for her husband, her children, and the entire household. For all women who become passionate for other men's beds turn into enemies of all the members of the household, both freeborn and slaves. Such a woman concocts falsehoods and treacheries for her husband and tells him lies about everyone else, in order that she alone seems to excel in goodwill and she alone runs the household, although in fact she loves laziness. This behavior brings ruin to all that the woman and her husband have in common. And this is enough said on this subject.

2. The woman must provide for the body food, clothing, washing, anointment, hairstyle, and adornment—in moderation, as nature requires. For those women who opt for all kinds of luxury in their food, drink, and surroundings, and wear what women wear, are ready to commit every

² Thesleff prints his own emendation: *άρμονίην*; I retain *άρμονίον*, found in Parisinus Graecus 1984, which yields good sense.

³ This phrase evokes the division of the soul proposed in Metopius (*On Virtue* T 118.1–10): the reasoning element (*λογιστικόν*) must control the two elements deprived of reason, will (*θυμοειδές*) and desire (*ἐπιθυματικόν*).

kind of wrongdoing, pertaining to the bedroom and other forms of offense. It is only necessary to quench hunger and thirst, even if it is with something cheap, and to alleviate cold, even if it is with fleece or a goathair cloak. For women to devour exotic foods, bought at great expense, and fashionable, is said to be no small transgression. But to wear utterly extravagant clothes dyed in a sea-bath of snails or some other expensive dye is complete foolishness. For the body merely wants not to be cold or naked for the sake of decency, and does not need anything else. But human frivolity in its foolishness throws itself upon things that are futile and superfluous.

Thus, she will not put on herself gold or gems from India or another country. She will not braid her hair in sophisticated ways, nor anoint herself with oil smelling of Arabian scent. She will not put make-up on her face to make it white or add blush, nor darken her eyebrows, eye contours, or her grey hair, hiding it with dye. And she will not wash herself often. A woman who goes for this sort of thing is looking for an admirer of her female lack of restraint.

For only beauty that comes from wisdom, not from such things, delights women who have become good. Let her not think at all that noble birth, wealth, coming from a big city, reputation, and friendship with famous and royal men are necessary. If such privileges are available to her, no harm is done; if not, it there is no reason to crave them. Lack of these things does not prevent a wise woman from living. In fact, even if a woman happens to be born with all these privileges, her soul should not seek out great and admirable things, but rather walk far away from them, since they cause damage, dragging her towards misfortune, rather than help. For with privileges come lies, treachery, jealousy, and torment, so that a such a woman cannot achieve peace of mind.

3. A woman must respect the gods in hope for good fortune, obeying laws and customs of her fathers. After the gods, I advise her to respect and revere her parents, because they are in all respects like gods and they work for the good of their progeny. As for her own husband, she must live so righteously and honorably, that she thinks of nothing on her own, but preserves and protects his bed. For everything depends on this. She must bear everything that befalls her husband, whether he is unlucky, does something wrong through ignorance or disease or drunkenness, or lives with other women. Men are forgiven for this transgression, but women are not, and punishment is imposed on them. Therefore, a woman must respect the law and not be envious. She must tolerate anger, stinginess, constant complaints, jealousy, slander, and whatever else lies in her husband's nature, and, thanks to her self-restraint, arrange everything so that it is pleasant for him. For if a wife

has affection for her husband and treats him honorably, harmony reigns. She loves the whole house and makes outsiders benevolent towards the household. But when she doesn't, she refuses to watch over the safety of the house, her own children, attendants, and the property. She desires their utter ruin, as though she were at war with them, and prays for her husband's death as she would for an enemy's, and she even becomes hostile to everyone dear to him, in order to be able to consort with other men.

4. This is how, in my opinion, a woman is harmonious: if she has become full of wisdom and restraint. For such a woman will benefit not only her husband, but also her children, relatives, slaves, and her entire household, which holds her possessions and friends, both fellow citizens and foreigners. She will attend to their bodily needs with simplicity, speaking and being spoken of well, being her husband's compliant companion in their life together. She will keep company with those relatives and friends whom her husband praises. What her husband finds sweet, she will find sweet; what he finds bitter, she will find bitter as well, if if she is not altogether lacking in harmony.